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The Wooing of Mary of Magdela

By JOAN ARMSTRONG ALQUIST

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DEDICATED TO ALL WHO LOVE THE LORD

A synopsis of the story

CHRIST WOOING HIS BRIDE

symbolized by the wooing of Mary of Magdela

MARTHA, a type of those who love the Lord but the cares and troubles of the world hinder their growth.

LAZARUS, a type of all who are bound in the grave's clothes of Death: For it shall come to pass, that all who are in their graves shall hear the Voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth.

THE WOOING OF MARY OF MAGDELA

Palestine, Bethany, a small town outside the City of Jerusalem.

A quaint humble home.

Inside two lone orphans of Jewish origin, Martha the eldest, and Lazarus, a brother who seems to be an invalid. Their faces are sad as they converse in low tones about an absent sister.

LAZARUS: "I have been looking over the Parchments, Martha, and we must be living in the time when our Promised Messiah was to come and deliver our nation from this hated Roman yoke. It is now thirty years since that star was seen in the East guiding the Wise Men to that babe born in a stable, which raised such a commotion and caused such a cruel massacre of little children, but although we are watching there seems to be no sign of His coming. If only our sister Mary would come home,"—as tears filled the dark eyes.

MARTHA: *(heaving a deep sigh as she rises to go)*—"Don't weep, brother, our prayers are sure to be answered soon. I will again put the lamp in the window and tonight I will leave the door a little ajar. It may be that her feet will be guided to the old home."

LAZARUS: *(soliloquizing)*—"Oh, Mary, my beautiful sister, all who have honored thee will despise thee because of thy nakedness.

How is a virgin of Israel become an harlot—a woman of the streets. Hear all people and behold my sorrow."

"What is it, Martha," as he sees his sister running to the door.

"Listen, what is that? It sounds as if some one is calling. Do you hear it, brother?"

Yes, he had heard, as with a great cry he bounds past her into the night.

Martha, following, sees him clasp a slender form in his arms, whose long, beautiful hair is falling over her rich clothing, as he moans, "Oh, Mary, my sister, my sister."

MARTHA: "Is it you, Mary," she gasps. "Oh, my baby," holding out her strong young arms, tears of joy streaming down her cheeks as she sinks down on the ground at her feet. She sees again the deathbed of their mother, and although only a child in years, she hears the anxious pleading of that mother and her promise to take care of the tiny sister placed in her arms, and the look of content that comes over the dying face. "Oh, mother! mother!" she cries, "have I kept my promise to you? Did you not know that you left her to me with all that fatal beauty that I could not hide away."

They both lead her into the house, into the room that has been kept ready for her since the night she went away,—crooning over her in their joy.

Mary looks up, her face, although pale and tired, is still wondrous and beautiful, as they lay her gently in her bed.

MARY: "Oh, forgive, for I have seen Him. I have seen the King in His beauty and He said I could go in peace and sin no more."

Martha and Lazarus look at each other in amazement—they don't understand. What does she mean; and they smooth back from the white brow the beautiful tresses, weeping afresh, as they see here and there a silver thread and the happy, healthful bloom gone from her face. But they ask her no questions.

They have laid her tenderly in her bed, but the next morning her fever runs high, as she tosses in pain, a burning look in the lovely eyes, as she laughs wildly, speaking of nights spent in the salons of the city with those who pay high for the price of body and soul. "Oh, forgive," she cries out in her agony.

Martha and Lazarus both watch over her tenderly, caring for her, and snatching her back almost from the brink of the grave.

Weeks go by before Mary is able to leave her room, but one sunny morning she comes, leaning on the arm of her brother, to take her place at the table in the small cozy dining room, but she only plays with the dainty dishes Martha has prepared with such care. There is a sad, faraway look in the sweet eyes that makes her brother and sister look at each other and wonder if they will be able to keep her with them.

MARY: *(looking up, seemed to read their thoughts and smiled)*—"Oh, I am so glad to be with you again; if I could only blot out the past; if I could only atone; but He told me to go in peace and sin no more. Oh, wondrous words—if I could only hear His voice again."

MARTHA: "You are not strong yet, Mary. Come and lay down again and I will open the window and let in the sunshine and the balmy air and brother will come and read to you,"—embracing her sister.

Martha and Lazarus alone.

MARTHA: "I wonder what has caused this change in our sister, Lazarus, and who is this King she speaks of. Where is the petulant, arrogant beauty that seemed so out of place in our home.

The hateful proud look in those wonderful eyes, a look so satanic that it made us shudder at times, it is all gone, and in its place we see only a contrite broken flower, utterly crushed and broken."

Martha taken up with the duties of the home leaves the care of Mary mostly to her brother, who proves an adept nurse, and between the two a loving confidential sympathy has sprung up in the many hours spent together.

MARY: *(noticing the almost emaciated body of her brother, which adds to her sorrow)*—"He must have been grieving for me while I was spending my hours and nights in careless revelry. Oh, my burden is more than I can bear. Oh, that I knew where I might find Him. Would He plead against me with His great power? Oh, no, but He would put strength in me. For my bones are pierced, and my body takes no rest. Terrors pursue my soul as the wind. I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

LAZARUS: "Come, Mary, let us walk a little in the garden, the flowers are all in bloom. Look, sister, there is your favorite," (fastening a spray of Bridal Wreath in her hair). "Let us sit under this tree. I think I see Martha coming with something."

As Martha appears carrying a bowl of savory soup for both, and they think how kind and good she is to them, as they make room for her to sit by them.

MARTHA: *(sitting, seems to be in a brown study for some minutes, looking towards Mary)*—"Mary, I would like to ask you something I have been thinking about a great deal lately."

MARY: *(starting up with a cry, her face piteous in its entreaty)*—"Oh, no, not that. Don't ask me dear sister to lay bare a past I am

trying to forget. Oh, brother, I see only love and protection in your face, and yours dear sister so strong and true, and He told me to go in peace and sin no more. Have pity on me, oh, my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me."

LAZARUS: "Oh, Mary, thou hast been wounded with the wound of an enemy, but is thy sorrow incurable—is there none to plead thy cause that thou mayest be healed and bound up? Who is this King, Mary, you speak of; can He be the prophet Moses told our people about who would come and save our nation, for we surely seem to be sold for bondmen and bondwomen? He is due to be here now. Who is this King, Mary?"

(But Mary's thoughts have flown—she does not hear the anxious queries of her brother.)

A scene rises up before her. She is again in the City of Jerusalem. The sun is dipping and bowing his farewell in the West. She has turned from her gay companions to gaze for a moment through the open window in the dance hall. A tall, stately man is passing below, the center of a large crowd of people who are pushing and jostling one another in their anxiety to get near Him. "Oh," she says, "What is this strange feeling at my heart"; but as the strains of the music begin again, she turns with a laugh and looks at the noisy swirling mass before her, but interest in them seems gone. Someone is at her elbow asking her to cheer up and come and join them, but she pays no heed, her thoughts are with the stranger she saw passing, and she turns to a mirror near her, looks long and earnestly at herself. "No," she murmurs, "I have lost none of this wonderful beauty of mine that has brought so many to my feet. I wonder, oh, I wonder," as she laughs lightly, making her way through the open door, "will He kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for verily His love to me would be better than wine."

The people are looking at her, for she is well known in the city, and they are curious to know what is taking her amongst them. "Would she dare," they say, "this woman of the streets."

But she hears them not. Her eyes are fixed on a fact wonderful in its loving tenderness—the man she saw from the window. She listens to the wails and sees the tears of those who are bringing and laying at His feet their sick and afflicted. She hears the deep penetrating voice that speaks with such authority, yet so gently. She watches the strong white hands whose touch brings health and joy to them at His feet.

"Oh, what is this strange feeling—how I wish I could feel the touch of those hands; but can I go like this," as she looks at the elegance of her dress, and looks wildly at her hair, that has been her pride, hanging all around her. "If I could only but touch the hem of His garment"; but horror fills her as she remembers for what purpose she had come. She looks again at Him and notes the nobleness and dignity of His person, yet sees sorrow and weariness written there to. Surely a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Suddenly it seems as if a light shone around her. He is looking at her. "Oh," she thinks, "He must have felt the longing of my heart." He is calling. She moves through that wondering crowd of people, and falling down at His feet overwhelmed with grief and shame, begs Him to forgive and heal her too. But what is that, she lifts her hand as though to ward off a blow, as she hears the scornful comments of some hurled at her. They wonder what He will do. "If He is a prophet," they are saying, "He must know the character of the woman at His feet—Mary of Magdela, the harlot." But His voice is ringing out like a trumpet in all its tenderness in her behalf.

JESUS: "She loves much and much shall be forgiven her"; and He raises her up saying: "Go in peace and sin no more."

MARY: "Did you ask who this King was? He is strong and mighty. The chiefest among ten thousand. He is altogether lovely. Look not on me for I am black. The sun hath looked on me. The glorious sun of righteousness. If I only knew where He maketh His flock to rest."

LAZARUS: "But listen, sister, do you think He is the Messiah? You know He is to come—a great King, and sit on David's throne; but this one you say is poor and a friend of Publicans and sinners. Could our Messiah come like that. I must look in my Parchments, it may be I did not understand; but, Oh, sister, I must rest, I feel so tired, and long to lay me down in peace and sleep."

MARY: *(is at his side in a moment, throwing her arms around him as if she would guard him from she knows not what)*—"Oh, Lazarus, do let me take care of you, you look so pale and careworn. I feel strong now, and I have tired you watching and caring for me. Stay with me, brother, do not leave me, for I have no one who would understand like you. Oh, yes, my King would; He was so wonderful to me. He drew me near in the day I called on Him, and said, 'Fear not.' "

Martha and Mary lead their brother to his room, and Mary, her own sorrow half forgotten, is tireless in her attention to her brother.

LAZARUS: *(the next morning as his sister sits by his couch)*—"How happy you have made me, Mary," taking her hand. "I wish you would tell me more about your King; but there is something I should like to ask."

MARY: "What is it, brother?"

LAZARUS: "Have the Chief Priests and Pharasees received Him?"

MARY: "Oh, no," as a look of sadness passes over her face, "only the common people, and they gladly."

They sit silent, as Lazarus draws the Parchments toward him and begins to read.

MARY: *(her face brightening)*—"Are you feeling better, Lazarus? Do you think I could leave you for a while?" (and seeing the questioning look in his face, continues): "You know that our people keep a feast today at Jerusalem and I should like to be there. It may be that I can hear something about this prophet. I will come again soon."

"Yes, do go, Martha will be here to care for me, and I think I will sit by the window. I want to dream today." (Mary stoops to kiss him good-bye.)

Mary in her room dresses quickly. Her heart is singing at the thought of seeing again one whom she has unconsciously learned to love. She has tucked away the beautiful hair inside a veil which she has thrown over her head and on her way out stops to tell Martha, who is busy as usual, of her intended journey.

Martha, coming to the door to look after her as she goes away, muses to herself. "I wonder who this stranger can be. He seems to have dropped from the heavens. He surely must be wonderful to have wrought such a change in our Mary. How I love them both, but I wonder if they ever think how I toil and work for them. But I must not complain," takes a peep at her brother to see if he is all right, and sees that he is deep in thought. "Dreaming again," she thinks, as she moves away to go back to her work.

Lazarus does not read, althought his Parchments lay open before him. He is thinking of his sister Martha. What a mother she has been to him, and how he has longed and wished he could confide in her more, but she had always been so busy.

*(*Lazarus dreams.) He sees Adam and Eve, the parents of the human race, made perfect. Their expulsion from Eden through Eve being tempted by the serpent, "the wisest animal of the field," to eat the forbidden fruit.

Their eldest son, Cain, slaying his brother, Abel, because of his being more righteous than he.

Noah preparing an ark for himself and family to save them from the deluge, preaching and warning the people of the coming judgment of God for their sins through the wicked angels.

Abraham leaving his own country going a pilgrim and stranger to the Land of Promise "Canaan." Offering sacrifices with his wife and servants on his way.

Melchisidic, a priest and King on his throne, blessing Abraham.

Abraham offering up his son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah. The angel staying his hand and pointing to a ram to be offered in his place.

Eliezer, Abraham's servant, asking Rebekah to be the wife of Isaac.

Isaac and Rebekah meeting together.

Jacob, their son, on his way to find a wife; sleeping, a stone for his pillow, and dreaming he sees a ladder and angels are ascending and descending thereon.

Jacob with Leah and Rachel, for whom he served fourteen years.

Jacob with all his cattle, for which he served other isx years.

Joseph being sold by his brethren into Egypt.

Joseph's brethren showing Jacob, their father, Joseph's coat of many colors dipped in blood, saying a wild beast has torn him.

Jacob's grief.

Joseph, a great ruler in Pharaoh's Court, giving orders to store all the food in store-houses, preparing for the great famine they expect.

Joseph's brethren coming to buy corn, but they do not know their brother in this great ruler, who takes them for spies, and their distress.

Benjamin stealing Joseph's silver cup and being brought back, standing before the ruler.

Judah's appeal on behalf of his brother, offering to be a bond slave so that his brother might go free.

Joseph, weeping, making himself known to his brothers.

Jacob coming to see Joseph with all his family, seventy people.

(Lazarus awakens and looks around anxiously for Mary.)

MARTHA: *(handing him something she has prepared for him to eat)*—"I am anxious, brother, it is getting late. I will go and look and see if she is coming." "Oh, there she is."

MARY: *(her step lighter, and her eyes dreamy and as if far away, throws her arms around them both)*—"Have you slept, Lazarus?"

"Yes, I have in my dreams been tracing the wanderings of our people in my Parchments. Have you heard anything about your King, Mary?"

"Yes," she replied.

"I have been thinking how grand to have lived when our people were led by God's hand and when He spoke to them in visions and dreams."

"Yes, but to me it is more to live and see Him face to face."

MARTHA: "What do you mean, sister? Did you hear anything more about this prophet? But you must rest, Mary, and then you can tell us the news."

LAZARUS: "And do hurry, Mary, for it seems I cannot wait."

"Rest. Look at me. Do you think I look tired? Oh, I am so happy.

How I wish you could both come and see the wonderful things He is doing and telling. The whole nation seems to be in an uproar because of Him."

LAZARUS: "Mary, did you hear by what name they called this prophet? You know our nation is threatened with terrible judgments because of its idolatry; but we are promised that a great prophet shall come before that great and terrible day."

"I wonder, Lazarus, if He will be greater than this One who is healing our sick, opening the blind eyes, making the deaf to hear and the lame to walk. As I came near the Mount of Olives I saw Him healing the child of a poor woman who did not belong to our nation, because she had told Him that even the dogs ate of the crumbs that fell from the children's table. I saw also that the chief priests and Pharasees were there finding fault and deriding Him because of the great miracles. I thought to have passed by them unnoticed because of my plain attire. I had been wondering if He would notice me and as I was making my way so I could get nearer to Him, I heard a low laugh near me. Looking around for the cause, Oh, could it be possible."

(Mary, her face full of horror as the words she heard seemed to burn into her brain.)

PHARASEES: "Is Mary of Magdela one of his followers too?" (pointing towards her with the finger of scorn.)

MARY: "Could it be possible that those Pharasees, teachers of the law of God, who offered such long prayers on the street corners,

many times I had heard them, but never dared to look or touch anything so holy. I held out my hands to them asking them in mercy to pity me, and turned to look wildly at my King. Had He heard these cruel words?"

Oh, yes, he had heard them, as he held out his hand to Mary and drew her near to him.

"Did you ever, brother, hear of anyone dying of joy? I thought I would when I felt those arms around me. In my hurry to get to him my hair had come undone, falling all around me, but oh, what is it I hear! Could that voice of righteous anger be His as it hurls denunciations at those Pharasees?"

JESUS: "Truly the drunkards and harlots go into the Kingdom before you. How can ye being evil speak of good things. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharasees, for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, for ye neither go in yourselves nor suffer those who are entering to go in. Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte and make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

MARY: "I saw the look of hate they cast on Him as they hung their heads in shame, for the people were looking at them, but my King had changed His voice to one of sorrow as He continued."

"I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. (And turning to me, as He pressed me to His side): "It were better that a millstone were hung about your neck and ye were drowned in the middle of the sea, than ye offend one of these, my little ones."

"I knew then, brother, He was my Saviour and King who stood by me."

MARTHA: "I will go and get supper ready, Mary, you sit with brother."

LAZARUS: "Mary, did He say anything about the Kingdom? I have been studying the Parchments and I think I begin to understand them better. I begin to see the hearts of our fathers who wrote to us about Him. If I were only able I would go and lay my cause before Him and He would make it plain to me."

MARY: *(her eyes filling with tears as she looks at her brother)*—"I have some good news for you, brother, but there comes Martha, supper is ready. Martha, why so sad? What caused that sigh?" (as she throws her arms around her drawing her down to the chair near her).

A feeling of loneliness had come over Martha as she had stood at the door a moment looking at them, Mary's face lit up with a beauty she had seldom seen and her brother, his dark eyes fixed so earnestly on his sister, fearful of losing a word.

"Oh, Mary, (a worried look coming into her face) be careful. Are you sure this Prophet is the great Messiah? The people are, they say, terribly stirred up because of His claims. They say He is the Son of Mary and of Joseph, the carpenter, and they will never accept Him as their Messiah who is to reign on David's throne; and the Romans have an eye on Him as a usurper. This Jesus says that even before Abraham was He was. Be careful, sister, can He be greater than the prophet Moses? What, is He more to you than the prophet Moses?"

"Oh, Martha, sister, I will tell you what He is to me. He is the Rose of Sharon 'in all its sweet smelling perfume.' He is the Lily of the Valley, 'in all its purity.' His head is as if of fine gold, 'so divine.' His locks black as a raven's and curling,—'When His judgments are abroad the people will learn righteousness.' His eyes like a dove's, 'full of peace and gentleness.' His cheeks like a bed of sweet spices, 'full of confidence.' His lips like lilies, 'full of wisdom.' His hands are as gold rings, 'full of loving helpfulness.' His body like ivory overlaid with sapphires, 'faithful and

true.' His legs as pillars of marble, 'full of strength.' His countenance excellent as the cedars, 'which if we look on will give us hope and life.' His mouth is most sweet. He is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, oh, my sister."

MARTHA and LAZARUS: "Oh, Mary, that is a song of loves, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense and with all powders of the merchant."

But Mary's thoughts are again with her King. She does not hear them. She is sitting again on the Mount of Olives.

MARY: *(talking in a low voice, while they lean forward listening)*— "He drew me with cords of love, guiding my steps so I would not stumble. He was there to hold me; how safe I felt. How weary His face looked. How it must have hurt Him to speak in anger to His brethren."

JESUS: "Mary, dear one, I must be about my father's business. I must work while it is day for the night cometh when no man can work."

(Mary, awed by his humility and lowliness, is grieving because her people see no beauty in Him. He begins to speak and she is sure He is speaking to her.)

JESUS: "Blessed are the poor in spirit;
"Blessed are they that mourn;
"Blessed are the meek;
"Blessed are they that hunger after righteousness;
"Blessed are the pure in heart;
"Blessed are the peacemakers;
"Blessed are ye when reviled and they say all evil against you for my sake, for yours is the kingdom of heaven."

MARY: "Did you understand, Martha, what I was saying?"

MARTHA: "Yes, sister, but I must think a little," as she rose to go, sighing at the many cares and toil of the household, and which were becoming irksome to her. What a longing she had for Him

whose yoke was easy and whose burden was light. Had she spent her money for that which was not bread, and her labour which had not satisfied her.

MARY: "One thing troubled me, brother; when He said, 'Blessed are ye when they say evil against you falsely.' When He was finished speaking I went to Him and said, 'Lord, they could not speak falsely against me, because I was evil and foolish and weak.' Oh, brother, I wish you could have seen the glorious look on His face—it almost dazzled me—as He pressed me to His bosom, whispering in my ear, 'Mary, do you love me?' I was shaking with sobs and tears, and was drawing myself away from Him, for I saw myself in all my vileness, when I cried, 'Yes, I love thee, for Thou hast become my salvation.' "

JESUS: "Then why those tears? Trust me, dear one" (and He kissed me with the kisses of His mouth). "Listen, Mary, to me, since the night you knelt at my feet thou hast been to me white as snow and hast become my dearly beloved. Fear not."

MARY: "Oh, brother, on my way home how I longed to be able to suffer with Him, and He is coming to see us, Lazarus. I told Him how you longed to see Him. We need not worry about our humble home for I heard Him saying He had no place to lay His head."

MARTHA: "Did you say, Mary, that the Master was coming to our house? Oh, I must be busy and do my best to get all things ready, and, Mary, do you and Lazarus get flowers for the table and place some here and there so our little home will appear inviting."

The little home in Bethany all astir.

Mary is standing watching at the window. It is almost a week since she last saw Him. She has fastened in her beautiful hair a spray of her favorite Bridal Wreath, and is dressed in a plain dress of spotless white. "I wonder," she muses, "if He will admire me today, and if I

will be as dear to Him as I was yesterday. Oh, yes, my King will never change. I can trust Him."

LAZARUS: *(is up earlier than usual. His face full of expectation, peering through his half open door)*—"How fair and sweet you have grown, my sister," (coming forward with hands outstretched). "I wish you would rest, Mary, I am afraid you will vanish away."

"Rest, did you say, my brother. I am always resting, resting in His love, and it is surely sweet to me, but I will lie on the couch. I must not sleep for I must be the first to meet Him."

(Lazarus gets his Parchments and sits down by her reading.)

"Oh, Mary, I see now they were types and shadows of good things to come, and your King must be one of the good things."

"Why do you tremble so, brother?"

"Because seeing that wonderful tabernacle I seem to have been with Him already, but I did not think He was so near."

Some people are seen coming in who have been invited, among them some of the priests who have come to watch.

Jesus arrives with the twelve, Mary meets Him and together they enter the home. When seated Mary takes her place at His feet, looking up into His face as He speaks, for never man spake as this man.

Some of the Pharasees ask Him why He eats with Publicans and sinners.

JESUS: "They that are whole need not a physician, but they who are sick, for I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

Some of John Baptist's disciples ask why his disciples do not fast.

JESUS: "Can the bride mourn while the bridegroom is with her, but the time is near when the bridegroom will be taken away. Then she will mourn."

MARY: *(looking pale and troubled, as she whispers)*—"Oh, that I might go with Him, for He hath called me as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit."

Martha at the table, seeming displeased that her sister neglects to help.

MARTHA: "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her to come that she might help me."

MARY: "Oh, the grief and pity of it. Can it be that my sister is faultfinding; but my Lord is my help in my time of need."

JESUS: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her. She hath promised, Martha, to be my bride."

MARY: "He hath brought me to His banqueting hall and His banner over me is love."

JESUS: "Thou art fair, my love. There is no spot in thee."

MARY: "My beloved is mine and I am His."

Jesus taking Mary's hand leading her out, asks her to walk a little way with Him as He has something to tell her.

LAZARUS: "How my heart burned, Martha, to hear Him speak. He surely must be that Prophet."

MARTHA: "If you read more in your Parchments it may be you can find out more about Him. I surely am sorry I spoke without thinking. How quick He was to take Mary's part."

LAZARUS: *(lying down feeling tired)*—"He said that He was the Good Shepherd; that His sheep knew His voice and followed Him; and that He was that bread that came down from heaven which if a man eat he will never die. I begin to see more clearly now the Tabernacle with its strange furniture."

MARTHA: "Oh, Mary, how I envy you—how near you have got to Him. What an understanding there is between them. I will not be afraid to trust you to Him, for thou hast obtained grace and favour in His sight."

LAZARUS: "I feel so tired. This head of mine seems to trouble me quite a little lately. Oh, Martha sister, come and help me into my room. I feel so weak."

MARTHA: *(running to him)*—"Lazarus, dear, what is it? Lean on me and maybe if you lie down it will pass. Were you asleep?"

"No, it seemed to me I was visiting our people, tracing them a little in some of their wanderings. I think there are more severe punishments awaiting them in connection with this Prophet. I begin to believe Him the promised Messiah or Saviour of our people, and they utterly refuse Him. Thank you, sister, I shall wait here to see if Mary will come soon."

MARTHA: "I wish she would come. She seems to understand, Lazarus, how to talk to you. I am always too busy, but since the Master's visit I have been thinking quite a little. I think that is Mary now."

Mary, coming in smiling, but when she sees her brother so pale and still, she cries, "Oh, what is it," and drops down beside his couch, taking him in her arms.

LAZARUS: "Oh, Mary, how I wish I could go to the city and hear Him again. I think it would put new life in me. For by the force of my disease is my garment changed, and my substance dissolved, and I will be brought to death and to the house appointed for all living."

MARY: "I will take you, brother, and help you and you will see and hear the wonderful things that will make you to love Him more. How patient He is with the twelve He has chosen to be with Him, to be witnesses of His regeneration."

LAZARUS: "I wonder why He chose those twelve men. They are only poor fishermen, unlearned, too. Did He ever say anything to you, Mary, about them? But do tell me what you were talking about while wtih Him, for Mary, I will never be able to see Him again with this poor sick body."

"Dear brother, He has chosen the twelve to be eye witnesses of the sufferings and treatment He received from His brethren, as well

as the glory He will receive from His Father; but, darling, stay with me, I could not spare you while my King is absent. I would have no one to talk to. Martha has no time to listen. I will tell you some of the things we talked about; it will revive you, I know."

MARY: "As we were walking I leaned on His arm, I felt tired and weary."

JESUS: "Come apart with me, Mary, and rest a little. I would know, beloved, if you love me well enough to suffer with me, even unto death."

MARY: "Thou knowest I love thee better than life."

(Martha coming in quickly, sits down to listen.)

JESUS: *(looking so pleased)*—"I have many things to say, Mary; some that will make you sad and sorrowful, but fear not, I am thy reward. My people go around seeking to take away my life, although I have for their sakes come to lay it down."

MARY: *(nestling closer to Him throws her arms around Him as if she would shield Him.)*

JESUS: *(gently puts them aside)*—"Did I not ask, Mary, if you loved me enough to suffer with me? Be brave and faithful to me, Mary, because for this purpose I left my Father's kingdom, to ransom this one which has been usurped by a wicked prince."

MARY: "Oh, why should you die—the just for the unjust?"

JESUS: "Because they are my brethren and are dear to me, and more, it is my Father's will it should be so, 'but sorrowfully' my people will not believe."

MARY: "But they must believe, surely for the sake of the work thou hast done which no other man has done."

JESUS: "I have done the work of my Father, but they say I have a devil. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I would have gathered you under my shadow, but you would not. Your house is left unto you desolate." (Jesus weeping).

MARY: "Oh, my heart, weep not. How could our people treat thee so cruelly. I sit lost in wonder, who for our sakes became poor, to be nothing."

JESUS: *(taking her in His arms saying)*—"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Come and keep tryst with me often, Mary," (leading her away).

MARY: "Oh," *(clinging to His hands),* "give me again those sweet assurances of thy endearing love, let me stay with Thee. Entreat me not to leave Thee, for whither Thou goest I will go. Thy people will be my people, Thy God my God; where Thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. Not even death shall part Thee and me."

JESUS: "Not now, beloved, but soon. Trust me, Mary."

MARY: "Oh, my brother, I will take you with me."

But Lazarus does not hear. He had gently fallen asleep. The two sisters hang over their brother almost overcome with grief, calling upon him to speak, but no effort or endearing word of theirs can open those eyes or bring back that gentle spirit. The life had gone back to the one who gave it.

MARTHA: "Do you think we could send for the Master? He said He was the resurrection and the life. You know, Mary, where to find Him."

MARY: "Yes, dear sister, you send for Him. I will watch by my dead."

(Mary's lament for her brother.)

"Oh, my brother, how hard it is to give you up. How distressed I am for thee. Very pleasant hast thou been to me. Thy love to me was wonderful. Oh, my Lord and Master, if Thou had been here my brother had not died."

Three days after Lazarus is in the grave.

The two sisters are standing by the window and wondering what delays their Lord.

MARY: "Behold, my Lord, for I am in distress. Martha, I see Him. Go out to meet Him and when He calls me I will answer."

"Oh, Mary," *(as she prepares to meet Him),* "if I were but as one that found favor in His sight I would go by His footsteps and feed by the shepherd's tents. I would remember the savor of His good ointments."

MARY: *(musing to herself)*—"Oh, Martha, how happy thy words have made me. What a debt I owe thee for all the toil and care thou hast lavished on me. Some day I will repay. When I am married my King and I will remember all. We will take the sorrow from your heart and the tears from your eyes, for all His will be mine."

(Martha meets Jesus with the Twelve.)

MARTHA: "My Lord, our brother is already four days in the grave."

JESUS: "Did I not tell thee, Martha, that if thou wouldst believe in me thou shouldst see the glory of God? Go call Mary."

"Oh, Mary, He calleth thee."

(Mary rises up quickly to go to him, weeping; the mourners following.)

When Jesus sees her weeping he groans in His spirit and weeps, asking where they have laid him. They come to the grave and stand looking at him roll away the stone.

JESUS: *(lifting up His eyes to heaven)*—"I thank Thee, Oh Father, that thou hast heard me, for Thou hearest me always, but for the sake of those who stand by me I said it that they may believe that Thou hast sent me;" (then cried with a loud voice) "Lazarus, come forth."

Lazarus coming forth out of the grave bound in grave clothes.

JESUS: "Loose him and let him go."

Mary stands as if transfixed, her beautiful hair has come loose from its bindings and is falling all around her like a halo of glory, her eyes filled now with tears of joy.

JESUS: *(going to her)*—"Mary, did I not tell thee if thou walkest through the Valley of the Shadow of Death I would be with thee; that my rod and my staff would comfort thee?"

MARY: "Oh, Thou art fairer than the children of men. Grace is poured forth from Thy lips making even those who are asleep to awaken; therefore, Thy God will bless Thee and make Thy name to be remembered."

They reach the little home amid the joy and acclamations of the people.

Some days had gone by and Lazarus looking well and happy reading in his Parchments, Mary sitting by his side.

LAZARUS: "I know now, Mary, it is He our promised Messiah. I feel as if I could fly on the wings of the wind and shout and tell the glad news. Oh, my people, hath God deafened your ears and shut your eyes that you cannot see and understand? Oh, I must read more, Mary. I must see if God will forgive so great a sin."

MARY: "You know, brother, He told you to search the scriptures—that they would tell you of Him. Let me hear it too, Lazarus."

LAZARUS: "Oh, Mary, listen to this: 'To us a child is born, to us a son is given. His name will be called wonderful, a mighty God, an everlasting Father. He will be a Prince of Peace.' Wait, I will read you a picture from life. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him, for that which they have not been told they shall see. He will grow up a tender plant in a dry ground. He will not have that form of comeliness that they desire. They will despise and reject Him. Sister, does it hurt you to hear this?"

MARY: "Oh, no, brother, I promised to suffer with Him. Read on."

LAZARUS: "A man of sorrows acquainted with grief they have hidden their faces from Him."

MARY: "Surely not I, brother. Oh, see if there is sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me."

LAZARUS: "Surely He will bear our griefs and carry our sorrows. Yet we thought Him smitten of God and afflicted by Him for He will bruise Him for our iniquities."

MARY: "Behold my King for I am in distress. There is none to comfort me. All that pass by clap their hands at me. They hiss and wag their heads saying, is this she who is the perfection of beauty."

LAZARUS: "He shall pour out His soul unto death that He may justify many."

MARY: "Listen, brother, he called me when I was forsaken and with great loving kindness he drew me to Him. Since I was precious in His sight He has loved me and honored me. I must go to Him. I will comfort Him for we keep tryst this evening. Tell Martha I have gone to seek Him."

(Mary and Jesus meet.)

MARY: "Oh, if you have to suffer, let me suffer with thee, for my eyes run down with tears continually and I am called by thy name. Leave me not."

JESUS: "Hush, Mary, rest thy head upon my breast while I tell thee. My Father hath a desire to the work of His hands and for the joy He has set before me I am willing to die. But, Mary, I will rise again. Dry your tears for I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

MARY: "Oh, but it seems a sword hath pierced my heart already, with many sorrows."

JESUS: "In my Father's house are many mansions, but I go to prepare a place for you, my bride, and my spirit will be with you Mary and show you things that will delight you and my angels will minister to you."

MARY: *(her gace all aglow)*—"And I will be busy with my bridal robe and will be watching for you until the day dawns. Oh, who could hurt thee."

JESUS: "My brethren mostly, Mary, some who have been with me in my wanderings, eating at my table, will betray and deny me."

(Mary coming home.)

MARY: "Oh, hold me brother, and you sister, and help me to bear it. The parting time has come."

(The brother and sister leading Mary into the house.)

MARY: "Oh, no, I could not lie down. I cannot while He is suffering. The Passover will be tomorrow and they will take Him."

MARTHA: "Then rest, Mary, and drink this and it will strengthen you."

LAZARUS: *(Next morning coming into Mary's room)*—"Do you think you would be able to tell me what He said to you, Mary?"

MARY: "Yes, Lazarus, He told me he would be at Simon's house today, that He was invited for supper. A good many of the Chief Priests and Pharasees will be there."

LAZARUS: "Are you going there today, Mary? Do you think you are able to bear all this?"

MARY: "Yes, brother, for He told me I would be able to drink this cup of suffering with Him; that His strength would be sufficient for both. So, dear brother, do not hinder me for I must see Him today."

(Mary takes a box from her drawer and saying goodbye she hurries away to the city.)

Jesus at supper in Simon's house.

Mary in a dress of pure white, her hair falling down covering her from the rude gaze of some, comes softly in taking her place at His feet and begins to wash them with her tears, wiping them with her hair, and from the folds of her dress she takes a box of ointment that cost her a great deal and breaking it poured it on His head, filling the room with a sweet odor. She does not see the looks of scorn from the eyes of those

Pharasees but she hears the faultfinding of Judas complaining of such waste.

Mary looking up as if she were guilty looks at her Lord. Nothing she thinks is too costly for Him. She is moving away but Jesus holds out His hand which she takes as He looks around on them.

JESUS: "Let her alone. Against the day of my burial has she kept this. What you have neglected to do she hath done," and turning to Mary: "To all generations this will be remembered to thee for you have done what you could."

JESUS: *(in the Garden of Gethsemane in agony)*—Drops of blood like sweat are falling from His face as His body sways to and fro. "Oh, Father, may Thy will be done, if this cup pass not from me."

An angel appears comforting him and he stands calm and waiting. Judas and a company of soldiers come. Judas kisses his Master.

Jesus standing before Pilate bound, as they smite Him on the face.

Pilate with Jesus alone asking Him if He is a King.

JESUS: "Thou hast said, but if my Kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight."

PILATE: *(To the people)*—"Behold the man, so noble, so patient, so lowly, truly a King."

They lead Him away bearing His cross.

Martha and Lazarus coming home from the city. Mary meeting them.

MARY: "Oh," (crying out), "why are you so pale? Why do you tremble? Oh, my heart, my heart, you have seen Him. Tell me, look at me, I am strong. I can bear all things for His sake."

LAZARUS: "Yes, dear sister, we saw Him and He looked a message to you as if He said, 'Lazarus, you will tell her.' "

MARTHA: *(Catching Mary as she falls down moaning out)*—"I must go to Him for He is suffering for me and I must suffer with Him."

Mary at the foot of the cross, her arms twined around it, her face uplifted to her Saviour, as she cries: "Oh, help me to suffer with thee;" but He replies: "It is finished!"

Jesus is taken down from the cross by some who loved Him and laid in a new tomb and the soldiers roll a stone to it.

Mary in her home preparing spices.

LAZARUS and MARTHA: "This is the third day, Mary; the day He said He would arise."

Mary with two other women at the grave, who go away leaving Mary alone.

Mary stooping down looking into the tomb and seeing nothing begins to weep.

SUPPOSEDLY A GARDENER: "Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?"

MARY: "Oh, sir, if thou hast borne Him hence tell me where thou hast laid Him and I will take Him away. I will whisper in His ear all my love and sorrow. I will deck Him with sweet spices. Oh, that my grief were weighed and my calamity laid in the balance. Mine eyes do fill with tears and there is none to comfort me. All mine enemies have heard of my trouble and they are glad. I know I have grievously rebelled, but hear and behold my sorrow."

JESUS: "Mary, my beloved," with the old familiar tone of endearment.

MARY: "It is the voice of my beloved. Thy lips, oh, my spouse, drop as the honeycomb on my troubled soul." Falling at His feet, embracing them.

JESUS: "Touch me not, Mary, for I have not yet ascended unto my Father and your Father. Let not your heart by troubled but go quickly to my brethren and tell them I am risen and will see them soon."

Mary comes first to Martha and Lazarus.

MARY: "Martha, Lazarus! He is risen. He is here. Come with me. He has sent me to tell the disciples."

The days and months grow into years. Mary has grown more beautiful. The sweet messages sent to her from time to time from her absent Lord bring her rest and peace. She is bending over, utterly engrossed with a piece of beautiful needle work, a smile playing on the sweet face. "Oh, I want my dress to be beautiful, exactly like the pattern He has sent me."

MARTHA: "Mary, are you looking for your King to come soon?" (watching Mary plying her needle). "Will your dress be ready by the time He comes?"

MARY: "Oh, yes," (with a smile), "I am putting the last finishing touches to it now, some very delicate little stitches, that will greatly enhance its beauty."

MARTHA: "I wonder how you will be able to work in such fine stitches, Mary. They will be very difficult, one can hardly see them. Can I help you?"

MARY: "You have helped me a great deal already, Martha, but these I must do alone. I will work them mostly by love and patience, for my dress must be glorious, without spot or wrinkle."

*(*Mary alone.)

MARY: "I wonder if He has seen and heard all I have suffered since He went away. While I have waited for His return, but when He folds me in His arms it will be all forgotten. Oh, I hear Him. It is the voice of my beloved," as he comes leaping over the mountains, calling her brother and sister.

It is a glorious morning, a beautiful sunlight coming up in the East, strains of wonderful music catching the ear of the watchers. Mary's friends are coming in with their little presents and to see how lovely the bridal robe. They stand lost in admiration as she shows them the beautiful inside lining, the color of pure gold, with an over dress of wonderful needle-work in pure white linen; her crown of Bridal Wreath,

to which is fastened her veil, covering her beautiful hair, and in the lovely eyes ecstacy of love and joy.

(People singing.)

PEOPLE: "The bride hath made herself ready and with gladness and rejoicing she shall enter the King's Palace."

MARY: "Oh, I hear Him. Listen all ye people! The sun seems to hide His face for a new and more glorious sun is coming up on the earth. He is calling me."

LAZARUS: "Oh, Mary, I am glad for thee, my sister. How greatly shall thy King desire thee. Oh, Martha, listen."

(Christ with a company of angels singing the glad Hosannas.)

CHRIST: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away! The flowers appear on the earth and the singing of the birds is come. Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away."

(Mary and her King.)

PEOPLE: "Who is this that cometh," leaning on the arm of her beloved. "Fair as the moon and clear as the sun." (The virgins, her companions, following.)

(Christ gathers Mary into His arms as they slowly disappear in the clouds.)

PEOPLE: "It is Mary of Magdela, her bridegroom is taking her to the home he has prepared for her."

Martha and Lazarus pointing to them, telling the people that the wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose, and the glory of the King and Queen shall be seen; the eyes of the blind shall see; the ears of the deaf shall hear; the lame shall walk; and the dumb shall sing; and a feast will be made to all who present themselves, both great and small; the wine of the Kingdom will be given in abundance in vessels of gold, "the vessels differing one from another;" none shall compel; for so the King hath appointed; but all shall drink according to every one's pleasure, and they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow, and sighing shall flee away.

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